

# U.S. Force Structure in Europe

## Essential Role of U.S. Forward Presence

U.S. forward military presence in Europe is an essential element of regional security and America's global military posture. Forward deployed conventional and nuclear forces are the single most visible demonstration of America's commitment to defend U.S. and allied interests in Europe. Simultaneously, the presence of overseas forces strengthens the U.S. leadership role in European affairs and supports our efforts to extend stability to the developing democracies to the East. Overall, the presence of U.S. forces deters adventurism and coercion by potentially hostile states, reassures friends, enhances regional stability, and underwrites our larger strategy of engagement and enlargement.

The forward stationing of these forces in Europe and the day-to-day interaction of our forces with those of our European allies helps to build and maintain the strong bonds of the Alliance. Our forces train with the forces of our NATO allies on a daily basis, creating a degree of interoperability among NATO forces that we do not share with most other militaries of the world. As a result of these routine interactions, we have the ability to conduct high-intensity joint and combined military operations with our NATO allies both in Europe and in other areas of common interests.

The successful DESERT STORM operation to expel Iraqi invaders from Kuwait in 1991 provides the best example of the tangible benefits of forward stationing U.S. forces in Europe to the defense of Western interests

beyond Europe. Because of our close cooperation with the NATO militaries in Europe, we were able to conduct sophisticated, large-scale military operations with the forces of the United Kingdom, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Turkey. These operations were conducted using NATO standardization agreements (STANAGs) for everything from doctrine for land warfare to specifications for refueling nozzles for fighter aircraft. The routine military interaction and habits of cooperation facilitated by forward stationing a sizable operational force in Europe made all this possible.

Our forward presence in Europe, and related NATO infrastructure facilities, also greatly assisted essential logistics support for Operation DESERT STORM. In other contingencies as well, forward stationing, by easing the burden on American air and sea lift, can be a critical factor in the capability of U.S. forces to rapidly execute our defense strategy. The U.S. military presence in Europe means that our forces are an ocean closer to areas of potential conflict and have a logistical base to support out-of-area operations.

U.S. security and humanitarian requirements outside the NATO area are now a main determinant of the tempo of operations for forces in the U.S. European Command, whose Area of Responsibility includes not only Europe, but also the Middle East Littoral and Africa. The pace of operations in the U.S. European Command has risen as a result of crises throughout its Area of Responsibility. Since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, USEUCOM has deployed forces 51 times to over 30



countries. In fiscal year 1994, forces assigned to U.S. European Command participated in six operations, all of them outside the North Atlantic Treaty area:

- **PROVIDE COMFORT**—Underway since the end of the Gulf War in 1991, Operation PROVIDE COMFORT maintains a security environment which permits humanitarian assistance to flow to the endangered Kurdish population of northern Iraq. This multinational operation includes approximately 1,500 U.S. military personnel and conducts 40-50 fixed wing and helicopter sorties per day, on average, from NATO bases in Turkey.
- **SHARP GUARD**—Since April 1993, three U.S. naval vessels and approximately 7,800 personnel participate regularly with NATO allies in maritime enforcement of sanctions against Serbia in the Adriatic Sea, with intermittent support from other assets of the U.S. Sixth Fleet.
- **PROVIDE PROMISE**—About 550 American personnel have been involved in delivering humanitarian aid and supplies to the people of Bosnia-Herzegovina from NATO bases in Germany and Italy since July 1992.
- **DENY FLIGHT**—Since April 1993, about 1,700 personnel routinely participate with NATO allies in enforcing the ban on military flights over Bosnia, monitoring the United Nations protection areas, and providing close air support to the United Nations peacekeepers in Bosnia, when called upon.
- **ABLE SENTRY**—Since the spring of 1993, approximately 500 troops have participated in the United Nations



NATO Information Service Photo

*U.S. F-18 participating in NATO's Operation DENY FLIGHT which enforces the no-fly zone over Bosnia.*

observer force, now called the UN Preventive Deployment (UNPREDEP), in the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia, providing a stabilizing presence and preventing the conflict in other regions of the former Yugoslavia from spilling over into Macedonia.

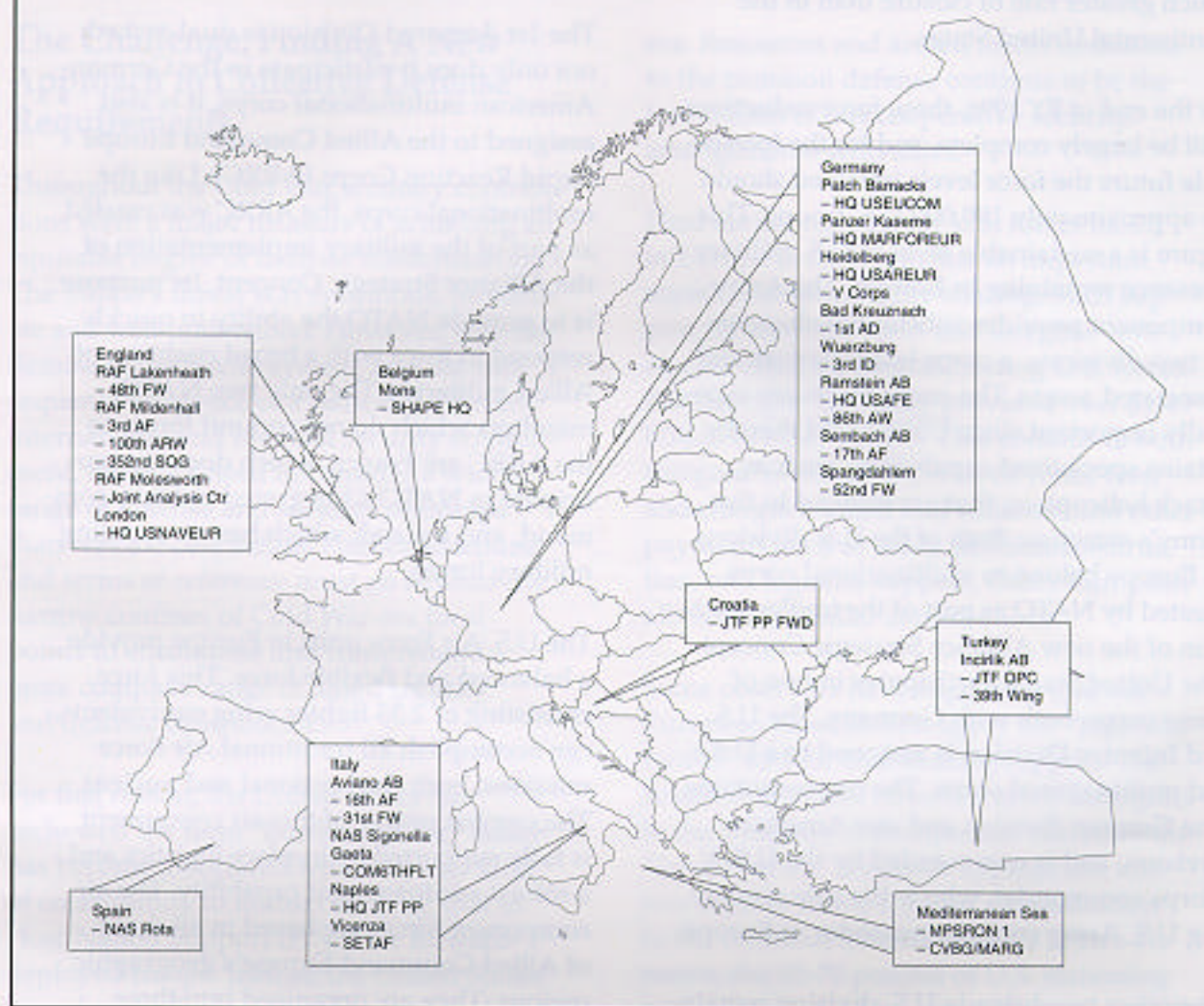
**SUPPORT HOPE**—From June through September 1994, approximately 2,000 USEUCOM personnel deployed to Africa, supported by an additional 2,500 USEUCOM personnel remaining in Europe, organized and carried out emergency humanitarian relief operations for refugees fleeing civil war in Rwanda.

## U.S. Military Presence In Europe

A substantial American forward military presence in Europe is necessary to fulfill the various roles outlined above. As the 1991 Alliance Strategic Concept states, "The presence of North American conventional and U.S. nuclear forces in Europe remains vital to the security of Europe, which is inseparably linked to that of North America." Forward deployed U.S. forces



## U.S. Military Presence in the European Region



in Europe underpin our commitments to NATO, support the U.S. role in the Partnership For Peace (PFP) program, and ensure a rapid and flexible world-wide crisis response capability.

While U.S. force deployments in Europe remain essential, the number of U.S. forces needed for stability and security has diminished. In response to the dramatic and favorable changes in European security since 1989, we have restructured and drastically reduced our force presence in Europe. U.S. European Command has reduced its forces

by over 200,000 troops since 1989. U.S. Army forces in Europe will have been reduced from 217,000 in 1989 to 65,000 by the end of FY 96 when the drawdown is completed. This represents roughly double the reduction in force throughout the Army as a whole. Army brigades in Europe have been cut from 17 to 4. Air Force presence has been reduced from 9.25 fighter wing equivalents to 2.33 fighter wing equivalents (666 combat aircraft to 168), with a corresponding reduction in the number of personnel. Nuclear forces in Europe have been reduced by over 80% since 1991. Overall, two out of three



U.S. military installations in Europe have been closed, again representing a much greater rate of closure than in the continental United States.

By the end of FY 1996, these force reductions will be largely complete, and for the foreseeable future the force levels involved should be approximately 100,000 U.S. troops. This figure is a sustainable level of U.S. military presence remaining in Europe. The Army component provides substantial elements of two divisions, a corps headquarters and associated assets. The corps assets are especially important since USEUCOM thereby retains specialized capabilities, such as attack helicopters, that are integral to the Army's structure. Both of the U.S. divisions in Europe belong to multinational corps created by NATO as part of the implementation of the new Alliance Strategic Concept. The United States participates in two of these corps, both with Germany. The U.S. 3rd Infantry Division is assigned to a U.S.-led multinational corps. The corps contains one German division and one American division, and is commanded by the U.S. V Corps commander, who is the sole remaining U.S. Army corps commander in Europe.

The other two-brigade U.S. division remaining in Europe is the 1st Armored Division, which is assigned to a German-led multinational corps. This multinational corps provides a good example of circumstances in which it is very much in American interests to place elements of our forces under the temporary operational control of trusted, competent Allied commanders in order to strengthen the bonds of coalition warfare. In a NATO conflict, this U.S. division would come under the operational control of the German corps commander. But the German-led multinational corps, like all NATO forces in the integrated military command, would ultimately come under the command of the

Supreme Allied Commander, Europe—who is also the U.S. CINCEUR.

The 1st Armored Division is dual-tasked: not only does it participate in the German-American multinational corps, it is also assigned to the Allied Command Europe Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). Like the multinational corps, the ARRC was created as part of the military implementation of the Alliance Strategic Concept. Its purpose is to provide NATO the ability to quickly respond in force with a broad coalition of Allied militaries. The only two NATO members which do not commit forces to the ARRC are France, which does not participate in NATO's integrated military command, and Iceland, which has no standing military forces.

The U.S. Air Force units in Europe provide a balanced and flexible force. This force, consisting of 2.33 fighter wing equivalents, can accomplish all traditional Air Force missions, both conventional and nuclear. The combat power of this air component is fully supported by in-place logistics and a robust reinforcement capability. The air component forces are based in all three of Allied Command Europe's geographic regions. They are organized into three fighter wings, an air refueling wing, an airlift wing, and a special operations group.

The U.S. naval component in Europe provides the reception and port facilities to support the U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean. This force structure includes the ashore support needed to sustain the forward presence of a Carrier Battle Group and a Marine Amphibious Ready Group. In addition, these forces provide ashore maritime patrol and surveillance aircraft, special operations forces, theater command, control, communications, as well as computer and intelligence support.